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# Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

*Provisional*

**6754**th meeting

Thursday, 19 April 2012, 3 p.m.

New York

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| *President*: | Mr. DeLaurentis | (United States of America) |
| *Members*: | Azerbaijan | Mr. Musayev |
| | China | Mr. Wang Min |
| | Colombia | Mr. Osorio |
| | France | Mr. Briens |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | India | Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Pakistan | Mr. Tarar |
| | Portugal | Mr. Portas |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Pankin |
| | South Africa | Mr. Sangqu |
| | Togo | Mr. Menan |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Parham |

## Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in Guinea-Bissau**

**The President**: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Angola, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome the participation at this meeting of the Minister of External Relations of Angola, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Guinea-Bissau and the Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Joseph Mutaboba, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Mutaboba, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Bissau.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Her Excellency Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Permanent Representative of Brazil, in her capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mutaboba.

**Mr. Mutaboba**: Thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the most recent developments in Guinea-Bissau.

Following the 12 April military coup, which was unanimously condemned by the international community, including the Secretary-General and the Security Council, on 13 April some members of the armed forces claiming to be a military command took responsibility for the coup and provided, as justified reasons, the alleged existence of a secret agreement between the Government and Angola to legitimize, through a mandate of the African Union Peace and Security Council, an intervention by the Angolan armed forces. The military command stressed it did not want power and had been forced to act in self-defence by attempts by the Government to annihilate the armed forces. A document was later circulated by opposition parties on 18 April purporting to be a copy of a letter from the Prime Minister to the Secretary-General, requesting an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council to discuss the internal situation following the non-acceptance of the election results, and the deployment of a peacekeeping force.

The military command, on 13 April, also outlined its immediate goals as, first, removing obstacles to security sector reform; secondly, fighting drug trafficking and consumption so as to restore the internal and external image of the country, and consequently attract foreign investment; thirdly, tackling the culture of impunity; and finally, ensuring continuity of the process of building a democratic State based on respect for basic human rights and freedom of speech.

Responsibility for the coup, although claimed by a military command, has been endorsed by the armed forces general staff and its positions exclusively conveyed by the spokesperson of the armed forces and chef de cabinet of the chief of general staff, Lieutenant Colonel Daba Na Walna.

On 13 April, the military command invited the political parties to consultations on restoring constitutional normality. Twenty-three political parties accepted the invitation, including the Party for Social Renewal and extra-parliamentary parties. The ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) has not attended any of the meetings. Two propositions were put forward, first, a constitutional transition envisaging restoring constitutional order through appointing the current interim president of the National Assembly as interim President and asking the majority parliamentary party, the PAIGC, to nominate a Prime Minister and form a Government inclusive of other parties; and secondly, a non-constitutional transition involving the dissolution of Parliament and the creation of a national transitional council, the appointment of a transitional President and a national unity Government under a transitional Prime Minister. On 15 April, 16 of the 23 parties opted for the non-constitutional proposition and some abandoned the table. A major point of discord was the period of the transition, with some arguing for a two-year transition,

while others wanted it to last until November 2012, when legislative elections were planned.

The PAIGC issued a statement on 14 April condemning the coup and calling for the unconditional release of its leaders and their reinstatement. On 16 April, the five presidential candidates contesting the electoral process also issued a statement condemning the coup.

There have been some attempts by the population and civil society to protest, but marches by youth and women have been met with a harsh reaction from the military, which has restricted freedom of assembly and expression by forbidding public marches and closing down private radio stations. A march on 15 April was violently dispersed, with at least one demonstrator seriously injured when a military officer slashed his legs with a bayonet. Freedom of speech — through the radio — and freedom of assembly have been restricted. On 15 April, the two trade union confederations, the National Workers' Union of Guinea-Bissau and the General Confederation of Independent Trade Unions, condemned the coup and called on all workers to stay away from work until constitutional order had been restored.

Overall, while Bissau and the rest of the country appear calm, with life apparently returning to normal, the environment remains tense and volatile, leading to a reportedly unusual exodus of people from Bissau to the countryside. While shops on the whole remain open, the banks have been closed since the coup, but may reopen soon. It is unclear how the military authorities hope to pay civil service salaries in a few days' time, although the military command has announced that banks will reopen on Monday. A continued crisis would fatally impact the cashew-trading season, which is crucial to the economy and the livelihood of the population. A humanitarian crisis is a distinct possibility.

There have been strong voices of condemnation of the coup d'état from multilateral and bilateral partners of Guinea-Bissau. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the International Organization of la Francophonie have joined the Secretary-General in condemning the unconstitutional coup in Guinea-Bissau. They are all unanimous in calling for the restoration of the constitutional order and the release of the detained leaders. Many have also called for the conclusion of the interrupted electoral process.

The CPLP and the African Union have further suggested that targeted individual sanctions be applied to the military and political leaders associated with the coup. The AU and the International Organization of la Francophonie have suspended Guinea-Bissau from participation in their organizations until constitutional order has been restored, while the African Development Bank and the World Bank have announced the suspension of their development programmes in Guinea-Bissau.

At the bilateral level, a number of countries have also issued strong statements condemning the coup. The ECOWAS position was further reiterated by a mission visiting Bissau on 16 April. The mission, led by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, met with the military command, the five candidates contesting the election process, and a PAIGC delegation. The mission said that it had transmitted a clear message that ECOWAS stood by its zero-tolerance policy towards the unconstitutional takeover of power. ECOWAS also clarified that Guinea-Bissau would be suspended from the organization should it fail to restore constitutional order.

The President of the ECOWAS Commission said that the military had undertaken to comply with the requests and that ECOWAS stood ready to assist them with the modalities. A few hours after the departure of the ECOWAS mission, the armed forces spokesperson ruled out the return of Carlos Gomes Júnior to power and said that there would be no presidential run-off.

On 18 April, an agreement between the armed forces and the political parties was signed for a two-year transition, the dissolution of Parliament, the destitution of the Government and of the interim President, and the maintenance of the military leadership.

With regard to the Angola military technical assistance mission, whose withdrawal was announced, I have learned that consultations between the military command and the Government of Angola on withdrawal are ongoing. The Government of Angola, through its embassy in Bissau, promised to notify international partners when the mission departs. On that note, I would like to pay tribute to Angola for a successful mission, which, unfortunately, became a

casualty of the deep-rooted political and military conflicts in Guinea-Bissau. Angola has not only contributed to the maintenance of stability in Guinea-Bissau over the past year, but it has also provided infrastructural support for the armed forces as part of its contribution to implementing the security sector reform road map.

This is clearly a political-military coup. Irrespective of the motives of the perpetrators, this act will go into the history books as one more coup that took place under the eyes of the United Nations and hence those of the whole international community. It will also be described as an act of military insubordination to the democratically elected civilian authorities almost two years after the ECOWAS/CPLP road map was adopted. We could have done more, and I believe that we can do more.

I also hope that all Bissau Guinean partners will learn from this latest setback that time is critical in whatever we intend to do in Guinea-Bissau. Had we moved quicker in providing the necessary resources for security sector reform, which would have allowed for the demobilization and retirement programmes to take off, we might not be discussing this matter this evening.

Finally, I would like to note that one of the problems of the Bissau Guinean polity is exclusionary solutions. The negotiations that are under way today are again based on the exclusion of an important actor in the political life of Guinea-Bissau, the current parliamentary majority PAIGC party. Other political forces, though minor, have not subscribed to the negotiations or their outcome. I believe that the parliamentary parties should be closely involved in any solution based on commitment to the restoration of constitutional order and addressing the question of inclusion.

It is therefore extremely important that the international community not be seen to be endorsing solutions that exclude part of the population or important national stakeholders. I call attention to the fact that any solution that excludes the PAIGC and other parliamentary parties would be a recipe for a future crisis and a negation of the will of the people as expressed through elections in 2008.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Mutaboba for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mamadú Saliu Djaló Pires, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Guinea-Bissau.

**Mr. Pires** (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): Allow me to express my deepest appreciation for this opportunity to convey to this highest entity of the coalition of nations, on behalf of the Government legitimately established for the eighth legislature and chosen by the majority of the Guinean people, current realities in Guinea-Bissau, and to request approval for a targeted resolution aimed at facilitating the country's return to democratic normality.

As the Council is aware, on the night of 12 April a self-proclaimed military command decided to carry out a violent takeover of the presidency of the country, after having made an attempt on the life of the Prime Minister and presidential candidate, imprisoning him along with the interim President of the Republic. The latest news indicates that their intention is to dissolve all institutions of sovereignty and establish new transitional structures in the country.

At any time and in any circumstances that would constitute a flagrant violation of the law and would thus run counter to the universal principle of the subordination of defence and security forces to a democratically established political regime. In the case of Guinea-Bissau, this rebellion is particularly serious because it is the result of a known pattern of behaviour that the armed forces have exhibited several times; because it is designed to reverse the will of the Guinean electorate regarding their choice for the new President of the Republic; and because it masks the unstated intention of promoting certain political elements.

Although they have not claimed official responsibility for this action — a perfect illustration of the nature of those involved — as is well known to all, the current military leadership are the perpetrators, headed specifically by the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, Lieutenant General Antonio Indjai. The motivation behind it is to undermine the ongoing process of reform and assure his continuing collaboration with organized crime and drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. No less serious is the lack of moral and political authority of the main opposition party and its leader, who, aware of their inability to attract the

popular vote, resorted to this tactic to subvert order and attempt to impose their will on the Guinean people.

As I stand here before the Council, we do not know where and under what conditions the interim President of the Republic and its Prime Minister, the leader of the largest political party and recipient of 49 per cent of the votes in the first round of presidential elections, are being held. But the wave of persecution and fear created by the military junta since the night of 12 April is not limited to them. The President of the Supreme Court has taken refuge in a diplomatic mission; the whereabouts of various Government members, heads of other institutions and individuals opposed to this oppression are uncertain, while their homes are looted by uniformed and armed elements and their families are attacked.

For informational purposes, let me give a brief and concise account of the main arguments of the self-proclaimed military command, the political parties supporting them and the opponents of the abruptly interrupted electoral process.

Concerning the elections, there have been allegations of fraud and that the process left out a considerable number of voters who turned 18 years of age after the last census. According to established practice in Guinea-Bissau, the elections were observed by national missions from civil society and several international institutions, notably the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), as well as a group of British parliamentarians. All declared that the process was free, transparent and fair, and that any imperfections in no way compromised the results of the first round.

Concerning the exclusion from voting of some young people, the dissenting parties' commitment to the truth should compel them to recognize that they themselves demanded that the 60-day period allowed for the scheduling of elections, at the end of hearings, be strictly observed. Furthermore, that position of the dissenting parties cannot be dissociated from the statement made by the Chief of Staff at a conciliation meeting convened by the interim President, in which he said that he reserved the right to be the arbiter of the electoral process due to the lack of consensus among the candidates. In other words, the decision of the National Electoral Commission and the ruling of the Supreme Court itself should be ignored in favour of an assessment and decision by the Chief of Staff.

The second accusation of the perpetrators of the coup d'état against the Government concerns the existence of a secret agreement aimed, they said, at destroying the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau. That is a ridiculous claim, since the alleged agreement is a letter addressed to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in which the Government requests and justifies the need for the Security Council to establish a peacekeeping force for Guinea-Bissau. That letter supports an earlier one sent to the Secretary-General a few days before by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, requesting virtually the same thing. Is a claim that the United Nations would provide forces to destroy the armed forces of a State to be taken seriously?

However, the list of insubordinate and undisciplined acts by the military towards the political regime is much longer. I invite the Council to refer to the memorandum supplied on this subject. So as not to waste members' time, I will summarize them here.

On 1 April 2010, in a display of force and a clear act of disrespect for the institutions of the Republic, Lieutenant General Antonio Indjai invaded the premises of the United Nations in Bissau to "liberate" Rear Admiral Bubo Na Tchuto. He subsequently kidnapped the Army Chief of Staff, General Jose Zamora Induta, and imprisoned Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior for several hours, in order to later put pressure on the Government and President Bacai Sanhá to appoint him and Bubo Na Tchuto chiefs of staff of the army and navy, respectively. They were confirmed in office through coercion and threats to the country's civil authorities, the Prime Minister and President of the Republic.

The President of the Republic João Bernardo Vieira, General Tagme Na Wai, General Ansumane Mané, General Verissimo Correia Seabra, Commodore Lamine Sanhá, Deputy Hélder Proença, Governor Baciro Dabó and, more recently, Colonel Samba Djaló, were summarily executed without benefit of a serious investigation.

Police in Bissau were beaten for intervening in a traffic accident caused by the son of Chief of Staff Antonio Indjai. On the eve of the most recent elections, police were publicly beaten and humiliated, in front of representatives of the national and foreign press, for having dispersed, without any use of violence, an

unauthorized demonstration in front of the National Electoral Commission.

Following that incident with the police, General Antonio Indjai, in a clear demonstration of force and with unclear intentions and without consulting the Government, ordered all police to surrender their weapons. They were thus prevented from pursuing their mission of maintaining public order in Guinea-Bissau.

In terms of financial management and the payment of military salaries, the military has never accepted the rules of transparency already in place across the public service. In that connection, there is no knowledge of the exact number and names of recipients and they never deigned to justify the exorbitant sums regularly withdrawn from the public treasury, presumably for food for the military.

With regard to the judicial police investigation of drug trafficking, various military members were arrested and put in judicial police jails on several occasions, but military leaders then forced their transfer to military prisons where they were immediately released. Their cases remain pending.

Aircraft belonging to drug dealers land on various improvised tarmacs, with the authorization of the military leadership and with total disregard for the legitimate civil authorities of Guinea-Bissau. Recently, it was reported that an aircraft landed on the Jugudul/Bambadinca road, counting on the protection of the military, under the orders of the Army Chief of Staff.

This is not even remotely the first time that the Council has convened a meeting to discuss the political situation in Guinea-Bissau. It is important to note that the Council's attention and commitment, combined with the action of the international community, has allowed substantial progress in recent years, despite the difficulties, not only in terms of governance but also in the creation of social and political structures capable of stabilizing the country permanently. That is seen by certain elements, particularly by the current head of the military, as a threat to their excesses and arbitrariness, and is leading them to commit the barbarous acts that are being carried out in Guinea-Bissau.

It is therefore urgent that concrete steps be taken. There is a need to affirm the democratic rule of law in Guinea-Bissau and that, in the current context, inevitably requires immediate and mandatory reform of those involved in the coup. It also requires a re-launching of the defence and security sector reform programme, under the coordination of the United Nations and with the participation of the partners of Guinea-Bissau, in particular the ECOWAS, the African Union and the CPLP. It also requires the restoration of legitimately established constitutional bodies and the completion of the electoral process to elect the President of the Republic.

I take this opportunity to welcome the clear, specific and unambiguous manner in which the international community, with a unified voice, condemned the 12 April coup d'état, with particular emphasis on the pronouncements of ECOWAS, the AU, the CPLP, the United Nations, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and many countries at the bilateral level.

We testify to the extraordinary performance of the Angolan Technical and Military Assistance Mission in Guinea-Bissau, in the framework of military and technical cooperation with the sisterly Republic of Angola, which has been widely acclaimed throughout Guinean society, at first by the military authorities themselves. In that context, we welcome the openness and willingness of the CPLP, ECOWAS and the AU to coordinate, under the umbrella of the United Nations, the provision of the operating units necessary for the continuation of that mission and the implementation of the memorandum of understanding between the CPLP and ECOWAS for the reform of the defence and security sectors.

In the light of those Dantean events that have occurred over recent years, perpetrated exclusively by the military in Guinea-Bissau, the Government and people of my country have no doubt as to the way forward. I stand before the Council on their behalf and I beg for the deployment of a peacekeeping force to Guinea-Bissau, authorized by the Security Council, with a broad mandate and over an extended period of time, in order to definitively turn the page and allow for the establishment of a legitimate democratic State in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

**The President**: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Georges Rebelo Chikoti, Minister of External Relations of Angola.

**Mr. Chikoti** (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I have the

honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) and its member States, namely, Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, and East Timor, while fully endorsing the statements made by the representative of Guinea-Bissau at this important and timely debate on the situation in that country.

Allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for scheduling this emergency meeting, as well as to thank all members of the Security Council for their willingness to deepen the debate on the serious situation that afflicts a member of the Community, namely, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, a country bound to the CPLP by linguistic ties and with which we share a historical and cultural legacy, supported by a multifaceted cooperation between our countries.

The reasons that brought us to the Security Council to participate in this debate are extremely serious for Guinea-Bissau and for its people, and are also important for the African continent and for the international community as a whole.

The 12 April military coup has interrupted the most positive period in the country's recent history, one of relative political stability, good governance and significant economic growth, which augured a promising future for the country, the pursuit of which was being encouraged and rewarded by the international community, as evidenced by the relief of the country's debt and by the positive assessments made by international organizations.

The military coup d'état, which has already been categorically condemned by the Council, the Secretary-General, the Peacebuilding Commission, the CPLP, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and by other national and international organizations, is of exceptional seriousness because it took place in the middle of the electoral process, which reflects a total disregard for the democratic will and sovereignty of the people of Guinea-Bissau. The military coup has therefore violated all the principles of democratic life and constitutes the most basic violation of article 25 of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. It cast its authors and accomplices under political condemnation, sanctions and prosecutions.

The history of Guinea-Bissau has been very tragic, marked by several coups d'état in recent years in which a President, a presidential candidate, three chiefs of staff and several other military and civilian authorities died. Given that situation, it was with extreme concern that the CPLP member States, meeting at a summit of heads of State in Luanda on 22 July 2010, after extensive consultations with the partners from ECOWAS, agreed on a road map for the implementation of the defence and security sector reform programme.

The CPLP's solidarity with Guinea-Bissau has been ongoing and active. Portugal and Brazil, through various development programmes, have supported the country in maintaining social services and economic recovery. It was also in the context of that assistance that, in 2010, the Governments of Angola and Guinea-Bissau signed a bilateral cooperation agreement that included a programme of financial assistance for Guinea-Bissau's budget and a military-technical cooperation agreement to support the country's reform of its defence and security sectors.

Angola, like all members of the CPLP and the international community, wants to see Guinea-Bissau consolidate peace, stability and development. That is why we joined the combined efforts of all, because we think that only through concerted actions on an ongoing basis and through ideas can we help the brotherly people and country of Guinea-Bissau to overcome the current crisis, as it has in the past. In that connection, Angola, in its capacity as President of the CPLP, has been holding open consultations with various international partners, such as the United Nations, the African Union, in which it presides over the Peace and Security Council, and ECOWAS, with a view to finding a lasting solution for Guinea-Bissau.

Guinea-Bissau has deep-rooted problems affecting a large part of its political and military class. The increase in drug trafficking in the country can affect not only the neighbouring nations but also the entire region, with consequences for regional stability and security. The ongoing instability that Guinea-Bissau faces, marked by successive military uprisings, which affect not only the institutions but also the entire political class in the country, is the result of long-standing impunity and the absence of functioning institutions, particularly the judicial system, due to the intervention of military authorities in public life. That makes the country hostage to military power. It is also

the result of the increase in drug trafficking, with the risk of turning the country into a platform for international drug trafficking.

Guinea-Bissau therefore needs adequate assistance, with the aid of the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, the African Union, ECOWAS, the CPLP and other actors, in order to find a lasting solution for the country. We call on the Security Council to consider adopting appropriate measures with a view to restoring constitutional order, ensuring the unconditional release of the arrested leaders, creating a peacekeeping force for stabilizing Guinea-Bissau, concluding the electoral process and providing a system of penalties for breaches of the measures adopted.

For the implementation of those measures and to help the people of Guinea-Bissau, time is of the essence. We cannot afford to wait and make the people of Guinea-Bissau suffer — people who are constantly at the whim of military power. The challenge to the international community is serious enough that if we fail to find appropriate solutions in due time, with the efforts of all, we will be again putting the people at the whim of the military, as they have been in the past.

The CPLP reaffirms the decisions contained in its resolution resulting from the eighth meeting of its Council of Ministers, held in Lisbon on 14 April, as well as all of the resolutions that have recently been issued by various bodies, namely the African Union's Peace and Security Council, ECOWAS and the Security Council, which on 13 April called for the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau.

We encourage the Security Council to do all that it can to support all of the measures that can be taken collectively to help the Republic of Guinea-Bissau to emerge from this crisis created by the military class, which has brought about extremely difficult problems.

I appreciate the attention that has been given me and the opportunity that I have been given to transmit those thoughts to the Council on behalf of the CPLP.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

**Mr. Bamba** (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time that I take the floor under your presidency, Sir, I would like to convey to you the sincere congratulations of my delegation on your election to the presidency of the Council for April.

(*spoke in English*)

It is my honour, on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara, Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to express to the Security Council the gratitude of the 15 heads of State of the Community for taking up for deliberation today the serious and disturbing matter of Guinea-Bissau, only days after the situation in Mali was discussed in the Chamber.

The Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States also expressed his gratitude to the Secretary-General for his abiding interest in, and concern over, the fate of West Africa and for the support that he has unfailingly given to the region's efforts to stabilize the peace and security environment there.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the able manner in which you are presiding over today's meeting. I would also like to acknowledge the speakers before me, in particular Mr. Joseph Mutaboba, Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, for his comprehensive presentation on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

Over the past two decades, the efforts of West African leaders and ECOWAS led to the progressive entrenchment of democratic culture and the consolidation of stability and, as a consequence, steady economic growth and a bright outlook in the subregion. However, ECOWAS has been under no illusion as to the fragility and reversible nature of the situation. Unfortunately, the unfolding developments in Mali and Guinea-Bissau are confirming our worst fears.

It should be recalled that the electorate in Guinea-Bissau went to the polls on 18 March to choose a successor to President Malam Bacai Sanhá, who passed away on 9 January. The period following the inconclusive first round of the election was marked by mounting tensions that were notably characterized by the following factors: the decision of five of the candidates led by Mr. Kumba Yala, leader of the Party for Social Renewal and the second-placed candidate, to boycott the run-off; malfunctioning State institutions amid rancour within the political class; fear among members of a section of the political class for their safety and fear of a possible military intervention; and rising suspicion and animosity between the Guinean

military and the Angolan Technical a Military Assistance Mission in Guinea-Bissau (MISSANG).

It was against that background that President Ouattara of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, as Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority, dispatched an ECOWAS mission to Guinea-Bissau on 31 March. Led by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, together with representatives of the African Union and the United Nations, the mission was undertaken with a view to calming the situation, persuading the five candidates not to boycott the run-off election, and assessing the role of MISSANG in the evolving situation and making appropriate recommendations to the Authority.

The mission presented its report to an extraordinary session of the Authority on 2 April. The Authority, having become convinced of the seriousness of the matter, appointed His Excellency Mr. Alpha Condé, President of Guinea, as mediator of the crisis, and warned the military once more to resist any temptation to disrupt the electoral process. Furthermore, the Chairman convened an extraordinary session of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council on 12 April to discuss the situation, along with the disturbing constitutional crisis and security situation in the north of Mali.

Among the pertinent decisions taken at that session, the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council called on the opposition candidates not to boycott the run-off election, cautioned the military against interference in the electoral process and took the decision to request the withdrawal of MISSANG from Bissau within two months, to be replaced by an ECOWAS force. Unfortunately, neither the opposition nor the Guinea-Bissau military heeded the advice from ECOWAS. On 12 April 2012, just as the Mediation and the Security Council meeting was coming to a close, the Guinea-Bissau military began operations that soon developed into a coup d'état.

The military detained key political figures, including the Prime Minister and front-runner in the election, Mr. Carlos Gomes Júnior, and the interim President, Mr. Raimundo Pereira. It took over State institutions and designated the military command as the ruling body. The Chairman of the Mediation and Security Council immediately condemned the coup, while the President of the ECOWAS Commission issued a statement on the same day, reiterating the Council's denunciation of the putsch and demanding an immediate relinquishing of power to the legitimate authorities.

Only last Monday, 16 April, the Chairman of the Authority dispatched a second ECOWAS mission to Guinea-Bissau, where the delegation held intensive discussions with the junta; the ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde; the five opposition candidates; ECOWAS ambassadors and the representatives of the African Union and the United Nations in Bissau. From the deliberations with the different stakeholders, the following issues and concerns were raised.

First, since independence, the political class and the democratic institutions in Guinea-Bissau have evolved under persistent political instability, to the extent that no elected President has ever served a full term in the country.

Second, governance institutions in Guinea-Bissau have often been dysfunctional, leading to constant paralysis in Government. That was particularly the case in the run-up to the last election. Also, corruption and drug trafficking have permeated the fabric of politics and the military.

Third, reversing that trend requires a very sophisticated approach that combines the fast-tracking of the ECOWAS-developed defence and security sector reform programme, constitutional and electoral reform, deep economic reforms to root out corruption, and a conscious and determined effort to root out drug trafficking and impunity.

Fourth, based on the statement of the junta and statements from some key interlocutors, Angola's military build-up in Guinea-Bissau through MISSANG served as the immediate trigger for the coup. In the period immediately after the 18 March election, tensions rose exponentially between the two forces, with the Guinea-Bissau Chief of Defence Staff accusing MISSANG of secretly boosting its force size and stockpiling combat weapons, which, according to him, contravened the bilateral agreement under which Angola deployed MISSANG. He went on to order MISSANG to withdraw within 48 hours.

Fifth, at the meeting with the military command, the spokesperson of the junta produced a letter ostensibly signed by the Prime Minister under the instructions of Angola and addressed to the Secretary-General, requesting authorization for the deployment

of a peace enforcement mission to Guinea-Bissau by the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) and its allies. According to the spokesperson, the Bissau military had acted to pre-empt that eventuality and the establishment of a counterforce in the country. The junta was threatening a showdown with MISSANG if the latter did not pull out within 48 hours.

Sixth, the psychosis generated by the threat of an Angola-led intervention and the possible confrontation between MISSANG and the Guinea-Bissau army had led to acute fear and an exodus of the population from the capital towards Senegal and other neighbouring countries.

Seventh, Bissau and other cities no longer have access to basic necessities and banking services, as businesses have begun shutting down.

The ECOWAS mission managed to secure an undertaking by the military command to restore constitutional order with immediate effect. The junta requested ECOWAS to assist in the development of the modalities for the transition, which is currently being handled by the mediator. Furthermore, ECOWAS demanded the immediate release of the Prime Minister, the interim President and other political detainees.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau is serious and complex. It threatens to undo the progress made in the subregion over the past few years. It also threatens international peace and security. Now is the time to take urgent and appropriate measures to defuse this time bomb. Having carefully reviewed the situation, ECOWAS intends to immediately deploy a military contingent, under the United Nations principle of subsidiarity.

The ECOWAS mission will ensure the protection of institutions and eminent persons, as well as the envisaged transition and electoral process. In the medium term, the mission will ensure the protection of witnesses during the investigation of acts of impunity and the commencement of the implementation of the defence and security sector reform programme.

The Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority will convene an extraordinary summit a week from now, on Thursday, 26 April, in Abidjan to further consider the situation in Guinea-Bissau, with particular emphasis on the restoration of constitutional order and the deployment of ECOWAS troops. The Chairman of the Authority also plans to dispatch a high-level ECOWAS delegation to Bissau on Monday, 23 April to engage all stakeholders in the transition process.

In accomplishing those tasks, ECOWAS shall work in close cooperation with the African Union, the United Nations, the CPLP and other partners, whose support will greatly enhance efforts aimed at re-establishing the rule of law and maintaining peace and security in Guinea-Bissau.

ECOWAS requests the Council to support those initiatives, which seek to contribute to international peace and security in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

**The President**: I now give the floor to Mrs. Viotti.

**Mrs. Viotti**: I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to brief the Security Council in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Mamadú Saliu Djaló Pires; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, His Excellency Mr. Paulo Portas; and the Minister of External Relations of Angola and Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), His Excellency Mr. Georges Rebelo Chikoti. I also welcome Ambassador Youssoufou Bamba, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire and Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). And I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Joseph Mutaboba, for his briefing.

It is most unfortunate that, 20 days after I briefed the Council (see S/PV.6743) on the progress that Guinea-Bissau had been making in the implementation of its peacebuilding priorities, I have to return here to brief the Council on the forcible seizure of power from the legitimate Government of Guinea-Bissau that took place on 12 April. I will not dwell on the details of the recent developments of the electoral process and the coup d'état, since they were ably presented by previous speakers.

The Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission has condemned in the strongest terms the forcible seizure of power in Guinea-Bissau and the arbitrary detentions of the

interim President, the Prime Minister and other senior officials. The configuration, moreover, called upon all parties to oppose any attempt to change the Government through unconstitutional means. We have encouraged the Government of Guinea-Bissau and all stakeholders to continue to work together to pursue political dialogue so as to preserve stability in the country and promote national reconciliation.

The solution to the current crisis requires the immediate release of all of the authorities presently detained by the military, the return of the armed forces to their barracks and the resumption of the electoral process.

We welcome the engagement of regional and subregional organizations and key international partners, notably the CPLP, ECOWAS and the African Union. We must continue to support their efforts towards the restoration of constitutional order without delay and a lasting and peaceful solution to the current political crisis in Guinea-Bissau.

This is not the first time that constitutional order has broken down in Guinea-Bissau. The recent history of the country has been, unfortunately, marked by upheavals and crises. However, the 12 April coup d'état is particularly regrettable because it happened at a moment in which progress towards a more stable and prosperous society was under way in Guinea-Bissau.

The people and the Government of Guinea-Bissau were implementing reforms to steer the country in the right direction. Political stability, improvement in governance and management reforms had led to economic recovery and the revival of trust in the country on the part of national stakeholders and foreign partners.

Stability had brought about important gains to Guinea-Bissau, allowing it to move from a situation of financial disarray into a more stable position, thanks to greater control of public spending, increased tax revenues and a considerable reduction of public debt. Due to such progress, the Government of Guinea-Bissau had managed to establish regularity in the payment of salaries, an element that had caused constant dissatisfaction and instability in the past.

With respect to security sector reform, Guinea-Bissau had adopted the necessary legal instruments and had made efforts to put in place a special pension fund in order to demobilize and reintegrate part of the current military and police personnel into civilian life in order to pave the way for a more professional armed forces.

Progress had also been made in the fight against drug trafficking. The Government of Guinea-Bissau had adopted an operational plan to combat drug trafficking and established a transnational crime unit within the West Africa Coast Initiative. The immediate return to constitutional order is crucial to allow those processes to move forward. Grave consequences will ensue if the current situation is not reversed. The military coup will certainly curb confidence and donor support, thus compromising the efforts to address security sector reform and drug trafficking.

The international community must urgently act to avoid a continuation of the current scenario. It is very important that the country's hard-won socio-economic gains brought about by stability in the recent past be protected and built upon in an environment of respect for the rule of law and democracy. The Council and the international community as a whole must act with resolve to assist Guinea-Bissau in breaking away, once and for all, from the cycle of violence, coups d'état, impunity and instability that has plagued the country for so long.

**The President**: I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Portas** (Portugal): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for expeditiously convening this important meeting.

(*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation provided by the delegation*)

We deeply appreciate the presence of Minister Pires in the Council as the representative of the legitimate and democratically elected Government of Guinea-Bissau. I also welcome the relevant statements by Minister Chikoti, in his capacity as Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP); by Ambassador Viotti of Brazil, in her capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission; by the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, who is playing an important role in that country.

(*spoke in English*)

Let us be clear. One month ago, Guinea-Bissau was on the path to complete a full democratic legislature for the first time in decades. In the first round of the presidential elections, which were internationally recognized as regular, transparent and free, Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior received 49 per cent of the vote; the second round had been scheduled. Today he is illegally detained, as is the interim President. The electoral process was violently cancelled; the Government was forcefully seized. Ministers are in hiding and their families are under threat. The house of our colleague Mr. Djaló was pillaged. Journalists have been detained and beaten. Looting by some military personnel is ongoing.

Had it nor been for the clear and united message of the international community, the interim President, the Prime Minister and other senior officials would probably be dead by now and there would be no hope of restoring basic freedoms.

The international community has spoken with one voice. The Secretary-General, the Council, the African Union, ECOWAS, the CPLP, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the European Union and many others have unreservedly condemned the illegal seizure of power in Guinea-Bissau by some elements of its armed forces. A few hours after the military coup, the Council clearly set out three conditions that are non-negotiable, namely, the immediate release of the interim President, the Prime Minister and all senior officials detained illegally; the full and immediate restoration of constitutional rule and of the legitimate Government; and the completion of the electoral process.

It cannot be business as usual in Guinea-Bissau. The time has come to draw the line. The time has come to say no — no to the prominence of arms over votes. The zero-tolerance principle regarding access to power through unconstitutional means declared by the African Union and ECOWAS and supported by the CPLP must be fully upheld. Otherwise, what message would we be conveying to the people of Guinea-Bissau and to the region?

This crisis has wider and very relevant implications related to the serious increase in the instability of the situation in Western Africa. The threats, which are connected, include increased proliferation and trafficking in arms and drugs; the growing threat of the Maghrebi version of Al-Qaida; and indications of serious internal problems in other countries in the region. Clearly, regional peace and stability are at stake. This is not only an internal issue for Guinea-Bissau, this is a regional challenge to stability. If we do not take action, this will become a problem for international security.

What is at stake in Guinea-Bissau is a choice between a State based on constitutional rule or a failed State based on the power of drug trafficking. The people of Guinea-Bissau, who voted just four weeks ago, are not responsible for this vicious cycle of instability, trafficking and violence. I recall that since 1998 we have had one war, four military coups and the murder of one President and four joint chiefs of staff of the armed forces, in addition to the assassination of several other senior officials. That is enough. We cannot tolerate murder and military coups as political means for solving problems.

The responsibility for those acts belongs to certain elements of the armed forces and a few politicians who keep fuelling instability to achieve, by illegal means, the political power they could not win at the polls, as well as the economic profits that arise from illegal trafficking, in particular of drugs.

The people of Guinea-Bissau, as any other around the world, aspire to overcome injustice and poverty, to live in peace, dignity and prosperity and to be ruled by a legitimate and democratic Government.

It is up to the international community to seize this crucial moment in the history of Guinea-Bissau as an opportunity to put an end to the spiral of violence and disruption of constitutional order and to move effectively forward with the reform of the security sector. We cannot miss this opportunity. Conceding or compromising in this context, allowing for anything less than the full restoration of the constitutional order and of the legitimate authorities — obviously including the interim President and the Prime Minister — as well as the completion of the electoral process would send a terrible signal and set a dangerous precedent. There are no transitional authorities, there are democratic and legitimate authorities.

Among the tools that the United Nations Charter and practice offer us, we should consider two, namely, restrictive measures and the establishment of a United Nations-mandated stabilization mission.

An illegal seizure of power must not go unpunished. Therefore, those responsible for the coup and those who politically support it should be targeted with restrictive measures, namely, visa bans and the freezing of assets. That notwithstanding, we will distinguish between those who persist in wrongdoing and those who repent.

The European Union, beyond suspending its cooperation with Guinea-Bissau, will be ready to move forward with sanctions on individuals who continue to obstruct peace, security and the normal functioning of constitutional institutions. We call on the Council to consider similar targeted measures.

We also believe that the Council should assume its responsibility and seriously consider the call of the legitimate Government of Guinea-Bissau for a United Nations-mandated multilateral stabilization mission, including contingents from members of ECOWAS, the CPLP and the African Union — a comprehensive and combined effort to tackle the root problems in Guinea-Bissau.

Allow me to conclude my remarks in Portuguese, as I would like my words to be clearly understood in Bissau.

(*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation provided by the delegation*)

The international community is united on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and speaks with one voice in vehemently condemningly the coup perpetrated by some military personnel.

The solution for this crisis is based, unconditionally, on the release of all the officials illegally detained, the re-establishment of constitutional order and the conclusion of the electoral process, which was internationally recognized as free and transparent. Those who persist in unconstitutional actions and those who actively support them will be subject to restrictive measures and should be held accountable. They should think twice about their actions.

The international community, and Portugal in particular, stands side by side with the people of Guinea-Bissau and their legitimate Government in pursuit of a resolution to this crisis to allow Guinea-Bissau to finally follow the path to peace, justice and development. As we say in Bissau, we are together.

(*spoke in English*)

As we say in the United Nations, let us act together.

**Mr. Menan** (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting, which, given to the wide range of eminent persons participating in it, provides us with an important opportunity to consider the serious situation prevailing in Guinea-Bissau as a result of the coup d'état of 12 April. I would therefore like to welcome the presence in New York of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Portugal and to thank them, as well as the Permanent Representatives of Brazil and Côte d'Ivoire, for their statements. I should like also to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau for his briefing.

As my delegation stated before the Council on 13 April, Togo rejects the resort to force as a means of resolving political problems, in particular as a means of taking power. Indeed, the coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau, which its perpetrators consider to be a solution, itself has the potential to undermine the order that the coup claims to establish. It is a not only a violation of the constitutional order and of free democratic expression but also a source of ongoing instability.

Our disapproval of the 12 April coup d'état, which is in line with the position of the African Union and of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as well as of other international organizations, has its basis in the problems that it is causing the people of Guinea-Bissau and in our justified and sincere concern for the country, whose prospects have nonetheless been promising given the progress accomplished in recent years in the framework of peacebuilding and stability. That progress was made possible by the commitment of the political class to respect basic consensual rules so as to move forward, as well as by the support of the international community, through the United Nations, ECOWAS, the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, as well as various bilateral partners, whose mobilization to assist the country is clear evidence of their interest in the well-being of the people of Guinea-Bissau.

There can be no denying the tremendous amount of work done by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in

the area of peacebuilding in that country, in its role as coordinator of partnership assistance. It also provided support to the electoral commission so as to ensure the smooth functioning of the electoral process, which, unfortunately, has just been abruptly halted.

By adopting resolution 2030 (2011), on 21 December 2011, which extended the mandate of UNIOGBIS, the Security Council sent a strong signal to Guinea-Bissau's citizens by supporting their efforts and by focusing on the challenges to be dealt with. The Council has frequently expressed its concern about the various threats facing the normal development of the country. It has regularly asked all political leaders to show moderation and the army to avoid interfering in political life. It thus rightly condemned this umpteenth coup d'état in the country.

But over and above the general, legitimate disapproval of the international community, the events of 12 April bring to the fore, for all of Guinea-Bissau's partners, the issue of the ongoing interference of the army in the political life of the country. That is a serious handicap for its economic development. People who live in constant fear of instability cannot give expression to their creative impulses for development.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau is of concern to us because it poses a real threat to the country's future that could undermine the progress made in recent years in areas where it is crucial to pursue reform in order to prevent a step backwards into chaos. Those reforms pertain in particular to that of the army and security sector, the combat against drugs and transboundary crime, in particular through the West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI), and the establishment by ECOWAS and the CPLP, with the support of the United Nations, of a pension fund for the military.

My country, which is actively participating in the quest for a solution in the regional framework, welcomes the ECOWAS initiative to send a stabilization force to Guinea-Bissau. It welcomes the junta's openness to a swift return to constitutional order. Nonetheless, it is a fact that the coup d'état, which came right after the one in Mali, is yet another event that further undermines the precarious situation in West Africa. Even worse, the putsch only adds to the list of ills that the region is, unfortunately, already facing, namely, trafficking and the movement of weapons and drugs, organized crime, the activities of radical Islamic groups, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, the humanitarian crisis, flows of thousands of refugees as well as secessionist inclinations.

Given that very bleak picture, the responsibility of the Security Council is significant, because there is a need to find the best approach to ensure that each coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau is not the next to last. We believe that the Security Council must maintain a firm stance regarding the militarist excesses that institutions, in particular in Africa, are constantly facing. We must do all we can to ensure that the progress towards democracy and the significant investments made by the international community in countries such as Guinea-Bissau bear fruit, and contribute to preventing unnecessary suffering from being inflicted on peaceful people as a result of coups d'état. Only thus will the Council shoulder its peacebuilding and conflict-prevention responsibilities and help to promote democracy, human rights and development.

**Mr. Sangqu** (South Africa): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this timely meeting. Let me join others in thanking the Foreign Ministers of Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Portugal, as well as Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mutaboba, for their statements and briefings on Guinea-Bissau today. We also thank the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire for his statement on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and we appreciate the useful statement made by the Permanent Representative of Brazil in her capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission country configuration on Guinea-Bissau.

I will be brief in adding our voice in stating our position on this African issue before us today.

The military coup in Guinea-Bissau that took place on 12 April has created a serious setback in terms of the progress made by the legitimate Government in establishing democracy and ensuring stability over the past few years. That unlawful act poses a threat to peace and security. It completely undermines international law and the principles enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which rejects any use of force or unconstitutional acts to assume power. It is critical that all efforts to address the situation in Guinea-Bissau be conducted in a manner that is coordinated, integrated and harmonized. Such efforts must ensure that the interests of the

country and its people remain paramount. Only a return to constitutional order and the release of democratically elected leaders will guarantee the respect of the will of the people of Guinea-Bissau, as expressed in the 2008 elections. The international community must convey a strong message that it will not tolerate disruptive military coups with impunity. In that regard, the collective efforts of the international community must further encourage, not weaken, the notable gains made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau in recent years in consolidating democracy and good governance.

The African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States, joined by the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) and the International Organization of la Francophonie, have all suspended Guinea-Bissau's membership in their organizations pending the restoration of constitutional order in the country. By its swift decision, the AU has demonstrated clear resolve on the part of African leaders to condemn and reject any acts of forced or unconstitutional change of Government on the continent. Its decision is a strong expression of its commitment to respecting and preserving democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance in Africa. Furthermore, it rejects impunity, assassinations and other subversive acts.

South Africa therefore firmly rejects any further attempt to undermine the constitutional framework and the rule of law in Guinea-Bissau, and underscores the AU's call on its international partners to force the perpetrators of the coup d'état and their supporters to accept the restoration of constitutional order. In that regard, we call for the unconditional and immediate release of the interim President of the country and all other detained leaders. That should be followed by the conclusion of the process for electing a new President of the Government of Guinea-Bissau, in accordance with the ruling of the country's Supreme Court.

We support the coordinated efforts of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the CPLP and bilateral partners aimed at restoring constitutional rule and returning peace and stability to Guinea-Bissau. The focus should turn firmly towards the key challenges facing the country, including the development of good governance, the deepening of democracy and the implementation of security and defence sector reform, as well as combating drug trafficking and related activities. We encourage the United Nations not only to support such efforts but to ensure that they are conducted in a coordinated and coherent manner. The perpetrators of the coup d'état, as well as their supporters, are ultimately responsible for the well-being and security of the political stakeholders and leaders who have been detained, the missing and captive ministers and the Guinean people, and must be held accountable for their deeds.

**The President**: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.*